



**Mission Statement:** *Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures*

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS BOARD OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

**Date:** Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022  
**Venue:** The Blackpool Sixth Form College  
**Room:** Committee Room  
**Time:** 5.00-7.20pm

**Present:** Ms Debbie Taaffe (Chair)  
 Ms Jill Gray (Principal)  
 Cllr Callum Baxter  
 Cllr Don Clapham  
 Ms Caroline Coyne  
 Mr Jeremy Mannino  
 Mr Alistair Burr  
 Ms Hannah Critchley

**Together with:** Ms Gail Yeadon (Deputy Principal)  
 Ms Tina Cooper (Vice Principal: Vocational)  
 Ms Amanda Crumblehulme (Assistant Principal: Business Support)  
 Mr Stuart Ormson (Assistant Principal: Student Support)

**Apologies:** Mr David Gascoigne, Mr Ray Baker, Ms Tabitha Davey and Ms Sukie Woodhouse

		<b>Action</b>
<b>49.2022</b>	<b>Preliminaries</b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted. The Chair bid farewell to HC support staff director on behalf of the board and thanked her for being an active member of the governing body.	
<b>50.2022</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no declarations of interest	
<b>51.2022</b>	<b>Consideration of any items of urgent business.</b> There were no items of urgent business to discuss	
<b>51.2022</b>	<b>Confirmation of Quoracy</b> It was noted the meeting was quorate	
<b>52.2022</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022</b> The minutes of the meeting were approved	
<b>53.2022</b>	<b>Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda</b> a) <b>Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b> (Item 44.2022 from the previous minutes) confirmation information regarding ALPS scores had been circulated to directors via a Loom video and presentation slides- email sent 12.09.22	

- b) Attendance and retention**-(item 45.2022 from the previous minutes) confirmation the following will be included in future attendance and retention reports:
  - Examples of how to read attendance by year group
  - Figures for 2-year retention
  - Leavers' data, including anecdotal evidence for students' reason for leaving
- c) Feedback from Directors' Conference**-(item 46.2022 from the previous minutes) confirmation directors were given a further opportunity to respond to the feedback form and a question asked was followed up

**54.2022**

**Staff Survey Report**-(Item 10.2 from the agenda) presented by Curtis Jackson (Head of HR). Directors were given an overview of the responses from the staff survey report 21/22, they were informed that there had been a 72% response rate from staff, slightly down on the previous year but still very good. It was noted there were 14 categories in the survey each with an individual score which was then used to benchmark against 10 other sixth form colleges. It was also noted there are fewer benchmarking questions (20) this year vs 37 in 2021, this is due to the corresponding question not being used enough by other establishments to give an accurate reflection. Two key themes resulting from the survey was communication and behaviour, the Head of HR talked about the next steps in how this will be managed which included sending all staff a Google Form to gather more detailed information. Directors were invited to ask questions.

**Questions from Directors**

Asked if the gathering of information is perceived as one dimensional i.e. (using another form) it was noted that initial findings from the Google Form will then will be followed up by the Principal via individual departments.

Directors were informed that the staff survey is confidential, getting to the source of the issue can be complicated, different ways of gathering information are being tested, including 1-1 catch ups with HoDs to try and unpick any departmental issues and finding out who does what in each department.

Early findings have suggested some communication issues are interdepartmental, it was noted that some departments don't fully understand the different roles within the college which can then lead to a lack of communication and understanding between departments. One strategy is to introduce a 'day in the life of ' to help address this.

In response to a question about how often directors see the staff survey, it was agreed directors will be presented with an interim update of findings in addition to the annual report.

Asked if there had been any improvement in student behaviour and the procedures in place, it was noted that student behaviour is so much better than the previous year, body language is much more positive and compliance with ID cards is much higher. It was noted that students appear to be more confident and much more mature despite having missed lots of social opportunities at school through Covid.

Directors were informed that policies around positive behaviour had been updated to reflect not only behaviour at B6 but beyond. Staff training throughout the summer had taken place to look at common threads such as safeguarding, SEND, getting to know your students and working together to find solutions. It was noted that there is a new level of disciplinary procedures in place with a much quicker response and support time.

Directors noted that the new timetable will help develop students' independence and give them more responsibility over their learning and study time.

**SLT**

Asked why in one department there was only one response, it was noted the timing of the survey may not be suitable to all departments and will need further exploration.

It was noted too that benchmarking is not as impactful as it was due to changes in the questions, it may be time to move away from this and start to develop an internal trend.

Directors were informed that 75% of staff completed the survey which had improved overtime and is a good return, however not consistent across all departments.

*Curtis Jackson left the meeting*

55.2022

## **Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

### **Results by qualification**

**A Level ALPs and GCSE results report 2022**-Directors received the report (paper 7.1 and 7.2) presented by the Deputy Principal; she invited directors' questions

### **Questions from Directors**

In response to a question about some subjects (MFL) having very low student numbers and the viability of continuing the offer, it was noted that from a business point of view it makes little sense but from the moral ground it is really important to nurture creative subjects, for example, music, as it feeds into college productions, which is recognised as part of the life blood of the college.

It was noted that a recent survey of local schools identified that only three schools in the area are offering German and the rest offer Spanish and French on a rolling programme. The college recruited 7 students to Spanish this year and without that offer these students would possibly have gone elsewhere. However, such low numbers may not be viable in the future.

In response to a question about the reduction in the number of students attending GCSE Maths compared to 2019, and lower attainment levels, it was noted that as a result of the grades being allocated under the CAG or TAG process more students attained a high grade (4+) therefore did not need to re-sit GCSE Maths/English at college, however numbers are increasing.

Directors were informed that findings show students enrolling at college with a grade 3 under the CAG or TAG assessment framework were generally one or two grades below this when they completed their diagnostic assessment at the start of the year. This has had a significant reducing effect on the grade progress measure.

Asked if there is evidence of a potential higher concentration for young people requiring additional support and if there is a breakdown of the results of SEND and non-SEND students, it was noted that the SEND report will include a breakdown by condition which will be presented to directors at the next meeting.

Directors asked SLT if they were pleased with the results, it was noted that the results were particularly pleasing despite the challenge of the last two years for both students and staff, however, the college will strive to improve on these next year.

Directors noted the pleasing GCSE results in English and maths which were well above the national average.

Directors asked if a significant decrease in ALPS scores compared to 2019 particularly in electronics and media was expected, it was noted that data monitoring meetings with curriculum heads will be taking place to unpick scores further. It was noted that a tangible way to benchmark how successful students had been would be to look at their next steps, almost all B6 students who applied for university secured their first choice. The Principal informed directors that staff could not have done anymore to support students.

**Level 3 Vocational ALPS report 2022** -Directors received the report (paper 7.3) presented by the AP: Vocational, she informed directors that she was delighted with the results which were very strong. It was noted that national issues with students not receiving results from Pearson in good time did not affect B6. This was due to all the hard work the AP Vocational and staff had put in over the Summer to ensure all B6 students received their results on time. The Chair thanked the AP for her efforts.

**Questions from Directors**

Asked if there had been any reduction in courses, it was noted that there had been no reduction in courses and the offer available to students remains good, however there will be a gradual change when T levels in Health and Digital launch in September 2023. Directors were informed there is a lot of uncertainty at present as a result of government changes, it was noted that the government had decided to keep some elements of BTEC but continue to be at risk.

Directors were informed that discussions are underway to create a level 2 academic programme that meets the needs of those students who wish to study A levels but have not yet secured the grades.

Asked if the college would deliver T levels if BTEC remained, it was noted that the college would continue to deliver A level and BTEC courses keeping with tradition and meeting the needs of the students. It was noted that the new skills bill states that the curriculum has to meet the skills needs of the local area, however colleges across the sector will struggle to provide resources required for T levels due to the lack of funding from central government.

It was reported that nine colleges may pull out of Health courses as a result of the large amount of money hospital trusts are charging colleges for T level student placements. Blackpool Sixth are currently negotiating to reduce charges and are liaising with Aspire, local nursing homes and GP surgeries.

Asked if the government had confirmed any time scales yet, it was noted that all government services at present have been put on hold because of the death of the Queen.

**Route 3 results report 2022**-Directors received the report (paper 7.4) presented by the AP: Student Support directors were invited to ask questions.

**Questions from Directors**

In response to a question about student destinations for those who did not pass their exams, it was noted that 5 of 6 students on the Health and Social course had significant health/mental health issue but despite this stayed on the course and were supported for their next steps, however this does not show in the data.

The AP: Student Support gave some examples of the support offered to students, he noted that there were so many students on the Route3 programme this year that in previous years may not have met the criteria, he also noted that the programme has provided some stability in their life assisting in positive destinations.

Directors asked, if we want to be trauma informed, how is the background of students shared with teaching staff without breaking confidentiality? It was noted that staff are given as much general information as possible, it was also noted that any safeguarding or welfare concerns are graded at a level which can then be shared with staff.

Asked if there was a system to measure the well-being and growth of students that can then be shared anonymously, it was noted that temperature checks are carried out but not on an individual basis.

Asked if success stories are shared with staff, it was noted that this is not done as well as the college would like as there are limits for sharing personal details.

	<p>Directors were informed that very few students were predicted to get high grades in December, however the statistics at the end of the year show tremendous progress.</p> <p>In response to a question about a comparison to the last normal year pre-Covid it was noted that comparing vocational subjects would be rather more difficult than A level and GCSE, however assessment did continue which means it remained similar to previous years.</p> <p>It was noted that ALPS won't be valid until 2023/24</p> <p>The Chair noted the attention to detail and determination to remove barriers to students learning is excellent and thanked staff for their hard work.</p>	
56.2022	<p><b>College Action Plans</b></p> <p>Directors received the College Action Plans (CAP) 2021-22 (paper 8.1) and 2022-23 (paper 8.2) presented by the Deputy Principal and were invited to ask questions</p> <p>Asked what the new college timetable looks like, it was noted that the new timetable is in place but being carefully monitored to ensure students are able to use their time to the best effect.</p> <p>Asked why the attendance target had been lowered in comparison to previous years, it was noted that during Covid attendance had dropped and the target remained the same and was not achieved, following a lengthy debate about wanting to inspire everyone to reach the target it was agreed to lower it to be more achievable. It was noted that attendance had increased across local schools but no where near pre-Covid levels, attendance and retention remains a focus and will feature in every leadership team meeting.</p> <p>Asked about the possibility of academisation forming part of the CAP, it was noted that if academisation were to go ahead there would be a separate action plan to supplement the CAP.</p> <p>In response to a question about how to respond to any staff issue, such as communication, it was noted that the college self-assessment report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) will be a detailed action plan and be presented to directors in the December board meeting.</p>	
57.2022	<p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Directors noted the minutes of the FCAT Safeguarding Board meeting (paper 9.1) held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022. It was noted the Safeguarding Chair has stepped down from the role. Directors agreed safeguarding training around local risks would be beneficial to the board. It was agreed to arrange this for a later date</p> <p><i>The Chair thanked SLT for attending the meeting and they left.</i></p>	SO/JM
58.2022	<p><b>Staffing</b></p> <p><b>Professional Support Update</b> provided by the Principal. It was noted there are no staff currently on professional support, directors were assured that monitoring of staff is ongoing and staff are doing their very best to support students at the college.</p>	
59.2022	<p><b>Principal's Report</b></p> <p>Directors received and considered the Principal's report September 2022 (paper 11.1), the Principal highlighted the following from the report;</p> <p><b>Recruitment</b>-the current number of new students stands at 1205 an increase since the report was completed, however more L6 students have left over the course of their first year which does put pressure on finances.</p> <p><b>Finance</b>-directors were informed that the recruitment target had not been met, as a result this will add more financial pressure for next year as well as the uncertainty over the staff pay award which is likely to be far more than anticipated, it was noted that schools are negotiating 5% and college may find themselves having to pay a similar award.</p>	

Discussions are ongoing about the college bus and if there is a better way of using the money, including a possible subsidy that could reach even more students. It was noted that every line of the budget is being scrutinised.

**Property update**-The Principal gave directors an update on the property strategy and noted that due to a change in criteria for the capacity fund it is unlikely the college will score highly enough to be successful.

**Fylde Coast SCITT**-Directors were informed that the outcome of the application to continue as an accredited teacher training provider has been postponed until October.

**Questions from Directors**

Asked when the college will have a clearer picture of the financial situation, it was noted that the staff pay awards have been as late as May in the past potentially being backdated from September.

Directors discussed encouraging staff to talk about the living crisis, as well as health and well-being. It was noted that discussions had taken place about the possibility of giving the pay award earlier, for example at Christmas as an interim payment. It was noted that the picture may become clearer over the next few weeks.

A director talked about a positive outcome of using solar panels and asked if this would be suitable for the college, it was noted that moving towards net zero is on the CAP.

**60.2022**

**Identification of any new or amended risks**

Financial situation, including the living crisis.

**Directors were asked to complete their attendance for this meeting on their DPR**

**Date and Time of next meeting**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 5pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_